

Angela McLean
Member- Montana Board of Public Education
Chairman Licensure Committee

Testimony- HB 230
Wednesday, January 17, 2007
3:00 pm
House Education Committee

Chairman Jore, members of the committee. For the record, my name is Angela McLean and I am a social studies teacher at Anaconda Senior High School as well as a member of the Montana Board of Public Education. I send my testimony today in opposition to HB 230 as I vehemently oppose any interference with the Constitutional authority prescribed in Article X section (3) (a) of the Montana Constitution. This section reads as follows: There is a board of public education to exercise general supervision over the public school system and such other public educational institutions as may be assigned by law. Other duties of the board shall be provided by law.

Montana Code Annotated §20-4-106 currently charges the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Board of Public Education with the task of adopting teacher licensure policies on the basis of various classifications of teacher certifications.

In addition Montana Code Annotated § 20-4-102 charges the Board of Public Education with the task of establishing policies upon which licensure is determined.

The Montana Board of Public Education has upheld these laws and met their prescribed constitutional duties by carefully crafting Chapter 57 of the Administrative Rules of Montana which specifically addresses all aspects of teacher licensure.

In my opinion, HB 230 circumvent current state law and the constitutional authority of the Montana Board of Public Education to establish and maintain licensure qualifications and procedures.

Recently, our Montana Supreme Court mandated that this legislative body provide a quality education for all Montana's students. In doing so, the court implicitly required that Montana's students deserve the best qualified and best trained educators. The proposed legislation at best ignores the court's directive and at worst will ensure additional litigation to ensure that all Montana students do in fact receive a "quality education". Accordingly the proposed legislation must not stand. On behalf of myself, all of my students and the Montana Board of Public Education I thank you for your time and attention.